

POSC 235

CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN POLITICS

DR LALANDE

SPRING SEMESTER 2013

Class: Monday and Wednesday 1:10 - 2:20 in Comenius Hall 201

Office: Comenius Hall 104

Office hours: M-W-F - 10:15 - 11:30 or by appointment.

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Textbooks:

J. Richard Piper: **The Major Nation-States in the European Union**
David M. Wood, Birol A. Yesilada: **The Emerging European Union**

Other readings:

One magazine: **The Economist**

Course objective:

The objective of the course is to introduce students to the full scope of political changes that have occurred in Europe since the end of WWII. The gradual development of the European Union and its various enlargements will constitute the framework of this course. Through the study of this development, students will hopefully understand how the complexity of the political relationships between the European states is largely due to the variety of their historical, cultural, social and economic differences. By studying this difficult process of political integration, students will also gain significant appreciation of the variety of the forces in presence, of the necessity to preserve those differences and of the need to channel their effects.

Course schedule**Monday January 14 – Class 01**

Introduction to the course. What is **Europe**? Geographic, political and cultural definition of Europe. The notion of sovereignty and the impact of culture in politics. We start with a quick review of the division of Europe after WWII and its immediate consequences. The victorious Allies (the United States and the Soviet Union for the most part) are soon divided by their conflicting ideologies. The Americans want to promote democracy and capitalism while the Soviets want to impose communism and central planning. The European countries are caught in the middle of the conflict. Research the main characteristics of the largest European countries in terms of geography, population, size of the economy, political regimes and social contexts.

Research the main features of **France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.**

Wednesday January 16 – Class 02

The Communists take over in Czechoslovakia, the Cold War intensifies and it is going to divide the continent for the next forty years or so. Creation of the Council of Europe followed by NATO. The Soviets answer in kind and create the Warsaw Pact. As the **Federal Republic of Germany (FRG)** becomes a new country and joins NATO, the Soviets crack down in Budapest. In Western Europe the UK refuses to cooperate. The necessity for French-German reconciliation leads to the first attempt at forming a Union: the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC). We discuss its creation and its institutions, the failure of the European Defense Community (EDC), and the success of the Treaty of Rome. Creation and launching of the European Economic Community (EEC) and Euratom.

Research the main characteristics of **Belgium, Luxembourg, Portugal, Greece, Spain, Denmark, Ireland and Austria** in terms of geography, population, size of the economy and political regime.

Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 1 pp.1-10 and chapter 2 pp. 12-19

Monday January 21 – MLK Day – no class

Wednesday January 23 – Class 03

The division of Germany and consequently of Europe becomes a done deal with the construction of the Berlin Wall. Meanwhile France and the Federal Republic of Germany pursue their policy of reconciliation under the leadership of President Charles de Gaulle and Chancellor Konrad Adenauer. Their relationship sets the tone for years to come. De Gaulle clashes with the United States because of NATO, he also clashes with the United Kingdom because of the EEC and with his EEC partners because of the ambitions of the European Commission. Different notions of Europe appear. France's attempt to assume political leadership of the EEC triggers the first institutional crisis (The Empty Chair crisis). Problems also arise outside Europe as the process of de-colonization goes on.

Research main characteristics of **Finland, Sweden, Norway, Switzerland, Slovenia, Poland and Hungary** in terms of geography, population, size of the economy and political regime.

Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 2, pp. 12-21.

Monday January 28 – Class 04

Cody Moyer gives an oral presentation on France.

France: some political, social and cultural realities – a centralized, national socio-political system in sharp contrast with the federal German system.

The relationship between the EEC and the UK remains difficult. The end of the 1960's is marked by unrest in the West, especially in France and Belgium where violent ethnic and linguistic conflicts trigger a political and social crisis. There is also tension in the East and crackdown in Prague. Western European hopes are crushed by Soviet determination and France remains suspicious of the U.S. and the U.K. More institutional problems divide the EEC on sovereignty and cooperation issues.

Research the main characteristics of **Estonia, Lithuania, Latvia, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, Romania, Malta and Cyprus** in terms of geography, population, size of the economy and political regime.

Read *The Emerging European Union*, Chapter 3, pp. 27-32.

Wednesday January 30 – Class 05

Chelsea Swick gives an oral presentation on the United Kingdom.

The United Kingdom: more political, social and cultural notions. A sociopolitical system based on economic liberalism, in contrast with France and West Germany. Comparison of the three countries: three free market economies, three democratic systems, and yet three very different sociopolitical structures.

French president De Gaulle's departure in 1969 opens the gate of the EEC to the U.K. For the first time, the EEC welcomes new members: the U.K., Denmark and Ireland. The Anglo-Saxons bring their own traditions, ideologies and values that translate into lasting consequences for the Community which takes on a new nature. Foreign policy and the country's relationship with the German Democratic Republic (Ostpolitik) create another political and social crisis in **West Germany**. Meanwhile the oil crisis puts the brakes on economic growth and brings years of stagnation and inflation. The EEC tries to get its house organized economically but political nationalisms and cultural differences come in the way: some ideas but no momentum. Meanwhile, the 1970's are also marked by Détente in the Cold War: the United States and the Soviet Union make a few rhetorical toasts and promises on the reduction of nuclear missiles.

Research the main characteristics of **Iceland, Turkey, Belarus and Ukraine** in terms of geography, population, size of the economy and political regime

Read *The Emerging European Union*, pp. 32-37

Monday February 4 – Class 06

Eileen Bryan gives an oral presentation on Spain and Vince Skorton gives an oral presentation on Italy

Greece, Portugal and Spain jettison their dictatorship and open up to democracy. For the EEC the political prospects are brighter but economic realities remain bleak. France and Germany take the lead in their effort to implement some kind of monetary order which leads to the creation of the European Monetary system (EMS). The late 1970's – early 1980's see the end of Détente. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan increases the tension between East and West. It is followed by a crisis in Poland when a non-Communist workers' union Solidarity is created for the first time in a communist-dominated country. Reactions in Western Europe and in the Soviet Union add to the tension.

The early 1980's: **Greece** becomes the 10th member of the EC. Political changes take place in **France** and **Germany** with good effects on the EEC and on the EMS. Problems, on the other hand, with the U.K. (the BBQ) and with the East (the Euro-missile crisis) show the necessity to strengthen the EEC.

Wednesday February 6 – Class 07

First quiz

Read *The Emerging European Union*, pp. 125-124, and *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 2, pp. 21-24.

Monday February 11 – Class 08

Harrisson Fonteix gives an oral presentation on the institutions of the European Union.

The Institutions of the EEC: The **Commission**, its role, powers and prerogatives from Walter Hallstein to José Manuel Barroso. The **Council of Ministers**, an inter-governmental institution tries to remain in control in the midst of increasing necessity for more federal measures. The **European Parliament** - a Parliament like no other one in the world: three sites and many official languages! The **European Council**, its purpose and its immediate effect on the day-to-day politics of the Community. The role of the Council of Ministers remains ambiguous: its meetings and its role in perpetuating the intergovernmental nature of the Community. Some other institutions: EMU, EMS

Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 3, pp. 42-52

The Emerging European Union pp. 88-100.

Wednesday February 13 – Class 09

Justin Charles gives an oral presentation on Greece and Portugal.

For the third time the EEC enlarges and the Ten become the Twelve as **Spain** and **Portugal** join the EEC. The Mediterranean culture penetrates the group and changes its nature. Jacques Delors becomes President of the European Commission and immediately starts rocking the boat. **The Federal Republic** assumes some leadership of the Community to the dismay of France but the partnership remains at its best. Gorbachev becomes General Secretary of the Soviet Union. The **Single European Act** re-launches the EEC. From the Single Act to the Treaty of Maastricht – this is a pivotal period in the history of the EC as economic growth returns. The road to Maastricht and preparation of the Maastricht Treaty seem smooth.

Read *The Emerging European Union*, pp. 40-52 and, as a review, chapter 6, pp. 92-100.

Monday February 18 – Class 10

The first paper is due

Mateusz Domanowski gives an oral presentation on the role played by Poland, Czechoslovakia, Austria and Hungary in the fall of the Berlin Wall.

As the heads of States and Governments of the EEC look for agreements and/or compromise in their preparation of the Treaty of Maastricht, they suddenly find themselves engulfed in unexpected events that erupt in the East. A small incident in Hungary triggers a process known as “Velvet Revolution” that will lead to the fall of the Berlin Wall and to a complete re-drawing of the European political map. A previously unthinkable chain of events unfolds on a daily basis.

Read articles assigned in *The Economist*

Wednesday February 20 – Class 11

Jared Centeno gives an oral presentation on the German Democratic Republic and the fall of the Berlin Wall.

1989 the somewhat peaceful revolution in Eastern Europe suddenly reshapes the continent and eventually seals the fate of the Soviet Union. The impact on the EU is enormous and the relationship between the powers involved becomes more complicated. Some extra reading on this peaceful revolution will be assigned as well as on the German reunification and some of its immediate consequences within the EC.

Monday February 25 – Class 12

The peaceful revolution in Europe follows its course. The Union achieves undeniable success with economic integration but runs into increasing difficulties with regard to political integration. The will to integrate is there, but traditions and cultures remain hard to overcome. While uncertainty prevails in Russia, ethnic and religious conflicts flare up again in the Balkans, and war erupts in the ex-Yugoslavia with no reaction on the part of the EU. New states are born, adding to the already prevailing confusion. Are they viable politically and economically? Is the European Community becoming an economic monster and a political midget?

Wednesday February 27 – Class 13

Second quiz

(Read *The Emerging European Union*, pp. 108-110) and *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 5 on France, pp.89-112,

Spring recess

Monday March 11 – Class 14

Matej Kovarik gives an oral presentation on the Treaty of Maastricht.

The Maastricht Treaty and its painful ratification show the difficulty of political and social integration. Differences in cultural and historical values come in the way of political intentions as the EU needs to get ready for major changes. The treaty post-ratification period in the early 1990's show that many lessons are left to be learned. Meanwhile, the relationship between France and Germany is, once again, the focal point of the new Union. On the issue of EMU, economic stagnation in the EU makes monetary union more of a necessity. There is disappointment in Central and Eastern Europe because young democracies and fledgling capitalism do not deliver the goodies quickly enough.

Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 6 on France and the EU, pp. 115-128.

Wednesday March 13 – Class 15

A crisis in the Union worsens due to its inability to put an end to the civil war in Yugoslavia. The Union really shows its absence of common policy and lack of initiative on international issues. The new enlargement to Austria, Finland and Sweden does not hide the problems but bring Scandinavian cultures and traditions into the Union. The Twelve are now the Fifteen. We take a look at the new members and at, the need for institutional reforms, and preparation for the Amsterdam Treaty.

Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, Chapter 7 on Germany, pp.139-159.

Monday March 18 – Class 16

From Maastricht to Amsterdam: with 15 members the new European Union needs flexibility and flexibility is born out of compromise. Once again, old nationalist traditions need to be overcome. Economic and monetary problems within the Union, EMU, the common currency and the (in)famous criteria add to the prevailing sense of uncertainty. Meanwhile a new Europe takes shape. Another issue that challenges traditions: the Common Agricultural Policy.

Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 8 on Germany, pp. 163-181 and *The Emerging European Union* pp. 55-59.

Wednesday March 20 – Class 17

The Central and Eastern European countries come knocking at the door of the European Union. Can they join? Under what conditions? Are those conditions fulfilled and, if not, what needs to be done for them to fulfill them? How is their membership going to affect the dynamics of the Fifteen? The cacophony that prevailed during the preparation of the treaty of Nice is a good indication of the problems to come and of the difficulties to accommodate the future members.

Preparation for and implementation of the euro is another thorny issue. Discussions of the advantages and disadvantages of the single currency lead to more cacophony and uncertainty. Is the Union ready for a single currency? Some member states (the U.K. for example) want to keep their own currency and opt-outs have to be considered. Meanwhile, the next enlargement to Central and Eastern European countries call for urgent reforms. How can the institutions of the Union survive with 20 or 25 members? The Nice Treaty fails to deal with the situation and shows the difficulties of political integration.

Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 9 on Italy, pp.187-208.

Read *The Emerging European Union*, pp. 59-62

Monday March 25 – Class 18

The next enlargement to Central and Eastern European countries (cont.) requires a major effort from every member state. Can the Central European and Eastern European new democracies bridge the economic and cultural gaps that separate them from their Western counterparts? Some derogation from the treaty of Maastricht is inevitable and needs to be recognized. Can common political and economic aspirations reconcile cultural differences?

Read *The Emerging European Union*, pp.71-81, and *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 10 on Italy, pp.212-229

Wednesday March 27 – Class 19

Compromise and new conditions come with the Copenhagen summit, the Constitutional Treaty and the Lisbon Treaty. Many questions are answered but many remain unanswered. In 2004 the EU has twenty five members and 27 in 2007. Turkey is still waiting in the wings and is becoming impatient. Should it join the EU? In fact, is Turkey even a European country? Why accept Turkey in the group and why reject Turkey? To answer those questions we need to take a look at the some of the relations of the EU with the rest of the world. It is a difficult question again because of differences among member-states.

Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, Chapter 11 on the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, pp.233-252.

Read *The Emerging European Union* pp. 83-84 and 62-69.

Monday April 1

No class

Wednesday April 3 – Class 20

Third quiz

Monday April 8 – Class 21

The American invasion of Iraq divides Europe, brings France and Germany closer together against American policy and damages the relations. Is there such a thing as Old and New Europe as former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld pretends? Are there other reasons why member-states of the EU were divided on the war in Iraq?

Read *The Emerging European Union*, pp. 173-182.

Wednesday April 10 – Class 22

As the EU expands it is confronted with the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression. Just like the U.S, the EU is crumbling under an ever-growing national debt. The European reaction to the problem is very different from the American answer. The financial tremor starts in Greece, spreads to Ireland, Portugal, then Italy and Spain and finally France before threatening Germany, the U.S and the rest of the world. Deep disagreements appear among member-states and how can the EU reconcile them?

Read *The Emerging European Union*, pp. 182-187

Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 12 on the UK and Northern Ireland, pp.255-276.

Monday April 15 – Class 23

The second paper is due today

Amidst the economic crisis the EU is also confronted with much higher unemployment due to the relocation of many industries towards developing countries where labor is cheaper. At the same time the union must deal with the emerging countries and especially China. Can the aging European population remain competitive with the young Asian population? Can the EU remain competitive against the new economic blocks? We take a look at Japan and China and at the likely future trade problems.

Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 13 on Spain, pp.281-299.

Wednesday April 17 – Class 24

As the euro crisis worsens and several euro-zone member states need financial help, disagreements between euro-zone member-states become deeper and more frequent. The French-German team shows signs of weakness. Elections in France and upcoming ones in Germany have a paralyzing effect on all intentions of reforms. It becomes more and more obvious that Germany is the undisputed leader of the EU and, as such, its chancellor tries to impose her views.

Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 14 on Spain, pp. 302-317

Monday April 22 – Class 25

Final question: what about the regions? Could the future of Europe be in the hands of the regions? Could it be the end of the nations in Europe? Could regionalisms replace old nationalisms? Integration and preservation of differences: the on-going double challenge. Is there any future for NATO, for a credible European defense policy, and for a European citizenship? Is there a European culture or just a mosaic of European cultures? Can there be a common foreign policy or just a common policy?

Catch up on the readings if you think it is necessary!

Wednesday April 24 – Class 26

Review and hopefully Q/A.

FINAL EXAM

COURSE POLICY

Attendance

Class attendance is mandatory and class participation is very highly encouraged. You must come to class prepared, with good knowledge of the material covered in the previous class, and of the reading assigned as homework. As a token of my good will you will be allowed to miss class **twice** (the equivalent of one week of work) with no question asked. Unpredicted situations can always happen and some tolerance is necessary. After two absences however you will need a serious note from your doctor (in case of illness) or from a person able to testify as to the seriousness of the situation. This, of course, excludes friends, roommates and neighbors, but not parents and College officials. Unless you have a very good reason for doing it, **DO NOT ASK** for make-ups.

After the two tolerated absences, further unexcused absences will be penalized and the final grade lowered. The student will be notified of her/his situation before the grade is lowered.

Grade assignment

There will be three hourly quizzes and two papers. The midterm grade will be determined by averaging the grade on the first quiz, the grade on the paper and the class participation. **The final grade will include the average of the quizzes for 40%, the average of the papers for 25%, the final exam for 25%, and the class participation for 10%**

Finally, **be careful with plagiarism.** Quoting from a book, journal, or some kind of website without indicating the source does constitute plagiarism and will be reported to the Dean's Office.

Social behavior

Remember also that a class is a social activity. As such, a few rules of social behavior must be respected.

I will not chew gum in class out of respect for you, and I expect the same from you in return. I will not wear a cap of any sort that might hide my face or part of it, and I also expect the same from you in return. To foster an environment conducive to learning all cellular phones will have to be turned off at the beginning of each class. Sending text messages during class will NOT be tolerated. If I see such activity going on I will confiscate the cell – I have done it in the past- and I will not hesitate to do it again. Also, there is no going back and forth to the bathroom, the water

fountain or wherever during class because it is disturbing. Make sure you take your precautions before going to class. Finally, I want you to know that I will do my best to be on time and I expect you to do the same.

I wish you all a good, productive and pleasant semester.

Recommendation

If you have a problem of whatever kind, please let me know early. Do NOT wait until the situation worsens. You are always welcome to stop by my office (Comenius 103) and to discuss whatever concern you may have.

IMPORTANT NOTE

Students who wish to request accommodations in this class for a disability should contact Learning Services for academic and disability support at 1307 Main Street, or call 610-861-1510. Accommodations cannot be provided until authorization is received from the Academic Support Center.